



Success Story - In-House Telepharmacy Solution Increases Pharmacist Availability in Small-Hospital Environment

In March 2010, West Haldimand General Hospital (West Haldimand), a 23-bed facility with active emergency and day-surgery services, was looking for ways to include their hospital pharmacy in their outcome-based improvement programs. Doing so was a challenge, as the hospital also faced a common and persistent constraint: The cost of a full-time equivalent (FTE) pharmacist was hard to justify on the basis of the low medication volumes.

West Haldimand initially used traditional staff-sharing solutions to overcome this constraint. It entered into agreements with West Lincoln Memorial Hospital (West Lincoln) to share the services of a pharmacist/manager, who spent two days per week (0.4 FTE) at West Haldimand and three days per week (0.6 FTE) at West Lincoln. Pharmacy technicians and nursing at West Haldimand performed the necessary quality checks when the pharmacist was unavailable.

Faced with overwhelming evidence that the status quo was unacceptable, West Haldimand management directed their new Pharmacy Manager to find ways to institute medication order review during prime daylight hours and arrange on-call services so that the organization had 24/7 access to a pharmacist.

Assisted by a team from North West Telepharmacy Solutions (Winnipeg, Ontario), West Haldimand chose Pharm-Q™ Electronic Supervision (ES) solution from Envision Telepharmacy (Alpine, Texas). This state-of-the-art, full-featured, web-based electronic supervision & medication order management (MOM) solution not only allowed the authorized hospital pharmacist to review orders from any web-browser located anywhere, it also provided anywhere/anytime high-definition electronic imaging of completed and filled orders, enabling the pharmacist to verify a fill before delivery to the patient.

The Pharm-Q ES solution was designed, installed and up-to-speed in eight months. The same pharmacist that previously commuted between two hospitals located sixty kilometers apart could now serve both pharmacies simultaneously during prime service hours. Installing the remote telepharmacy solution along with a MOM provided the coverage and oversight needed for any time/anywhere supervision. A recent Accreditation Canada survey at West Haldimand highlighted the hospital's innovative approach to achieving 24/7 pharmacist access using supportive technologies.

About West Haldimand General Hospital

West Haldimand General Hospital (West Haldimand) is a 23-bed rural hospital located in Hagersville, Ontario, originally opened in 1964. Within an innovative management partnership with Hamilton Health Sciences Corporation, West Haldimand operates a 24/7 ER and is increasing its ambulatory services, focused on the health needs of its stakeholders. Patient safety, continuous quality improvement and connectedness with the community are strategic drivers for the organization. West Haldimand shares staff with several nearby health providers and is continually looking for partnerships to decrease overhead expenses and redirect funds to direct clinical care.

For more information on West Haldimand please visit www.whgh.ca.

About Envision Telepharmacy, LLC

Envision Telepharmacy, established in 2004, is a pioneer in developing services, tools and systems that provide electronic supervision and remote order processing through high-bandwidth, standards-based web technology, still imaging, and high resolution video. Enabling and realizing safe, quality patient care and pharmacist access through the use of compliant and cost-effective telepharmacy solutions is its mission. North West Telepharmacy Solutions is the exclusive software distributor of Envision's Pharm-Q™ Medication Order Management (MOM) software in Canada.

For more information about Envision Telepharmacy, LLC visit www.envision-rx.com or contact CEO Emily Alexander, PharmD, BCPS at (432) 897-0754 ext 105 or email [envision@envision-rx\(dot\)com](mailto:envision@envision-rx(dot)com).

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